

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8233

INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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CODEL IPU

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP, LA

SUBJECT: LAO PARTICIPATION AT IPU MEETING IN

BUCHAREST, APRIL 11-20

REF: STATE 54622

1. THE FOLLOWING FIVE DEPUTIES OF LAO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL ATTEND IPU MEETING IN BUCHAREST:

A) CHAO (PRINCE) SOPSAISANA -- DEPUTY FROM XIENG KHOUANG PROVINCE AND VICE PRESIDENT OF LAO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. HE ATTENDED LAST YEAR'S MEETING IN ABIDJAN; HAS LONG BEEN ACTIVE IN IPU AFFAIRS; AND NOTED TO US THAT, IN THIS CONTEXT, HE HAS BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH SENATOR SCOTT AND REPRESENTATIVE DERWINSKI. SOPSAISANA, AGE 48, IS WELL-KNOWN LAO PERSONALITY, WAS LAO AMBASSADOR TO CAMBODIA 1962-65, WAS ELECTED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1965 AND TO VICE-PRESIDENCY OF ASSEMBLY IN 1968. SOPSAISANA HAS TRAVELED WIDELY IN ASIA, THE UNITED STATES AND EUROPE. HE SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH AND FAIRLY GOOD ENGLISH. HE LEFT VIENTIANE LAST WEEK

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EN ROUTE TO TOKYO, WHERE HE WILL REPRESENT THE

LAO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT THE INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF THE "LAO-JAPANESE ASSOCIATION OF PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP". AFTER THE TOKYO CEREMONIES, HE WILL BE VISITING WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK IN EARLY APRIL BEFORE PROCEEDING TO BUCHAREST.

B) MOUA XU, AGE 43, DEPUTY REPRESENTING REFUGEE CONSTITUENCY FROM FAR NORTHEAST PROVINCE OF HOUA PHAN, IS MEMBER OF MEO ETHNIC GROUP. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE JOINED ARMY AT AGE 16 AND WAS A CAPTAIN IN A GUERRILLA UNIT OPERATING IN NORTHWESTERN LAOS BEFORE ELECTION TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1967. HE WAS, AT ONE TIME, REPRESENTATIVE OF MEO LEADER, GENERAL VANG PAO, IN NORTHWESTERN LAOS AND STILL IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH VANG PAO AND CHAO SOPSAISANA. HIS PRIMARY LANGUAGE IS MEO, WITH SOME LIMITED FACILITY IN LAO AND FRENCH, BUT APPARENTLY NO ABILITY TO CARRY ON CONVERSATION IN ENGLISH.

C) FANH SIMOUKDA, AGE 64, DEPUTY FROM SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE IN SOUTH LOAS AND MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND LAWS AND POLITICS. A WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN, HE WAS AN ARMY OFFICER AND, LATER, GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL BEFORE ELECTION TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1960. HE ATTENDED HIS FIRST IPU MEETING IN GENEVA IN 1961. HE IS THESSROTHER-IN-LAW OF EXILED GENERAL PHOUMI NOSAVAN, ONE-TIME LEADER OF THE RIGHT WING IN LAOS. HE SPEAKS FRENCH.

D) SERC VORAVONGSA, DEPUTY FROM KHAMMOUANE PROVINCE (EAST OF VIENTIANE IN CENTRAL LAOS); WAS FIRST ELECTED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN 1965; IS NOW MEMBER OF BUDGET AND DEFENSE COMMITTEES; ATTENDED 1973 IPU MEETING IN ADIDJAN; AND IS SECRETARY OF ASSEMBLY'S IPU COMMITTEE. HE SPEAKS FRENCH AND LIMITED ENGLISH.

E) AMKHA SOUKHAVONG, FIRST ELECTED DEPUTY FROM BORIKHANE PROVINCE (CENTRAL LAOS) IN 1972, AFTER A MILITARY CAREER WHICH HE BEGAN IN 1941 (WITH FRENCH COLONIAL ARMY) AND ENDED AS MAJOR GENERAL AND DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE ROYAL LAO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARMY. HE IS NOW MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEES OF BUDGET AND ECONOMY. HE STUDIED IN FRANCE AND SOUTH VIETNAM AND HAS VISITED THE UNITED STATES. HE ENJOYS HUNTING, IS ROMAN CATHOLIC, SPEAKS FLUENT FRENCH AND UNDERSTANDS, BUT DOES NOT SPEAK, ENGLISH.

2. CHAO SOPSAISANA WILL, BY VIRTUE OF HIS EXPERIENCE AND POSITION, PROBABLY DOMINATE LAO IPY DELEGATION AND

WILL BE POINT OF PRINCIPAL CONTACT FOR U.S. DELEGATION.
HIS VISIT TO JAPAN AND TO THE UNITED STATES
JUST PRIOR TO THE MEETING WOULD BE SUITABLE CONVERSATIONAL TOPIC.
DISCUSSIONS WITH LAO ON SUBJECTS OTHER THAN THOSE
IMMEDIATELY RELATED TO SOUTHEAST ASIA WILL PROBABLY BE
FAIRLY GENERAL. U.S. DELEGATION MAY, HOWEVER, WISH TO
NOTE PROGRESS TOWARD FORMATION OF NEW COALITION GOVERN-
MENT WHICH HAS OCCURRED IN LAOS AND EXPRESS SATISFACTION
AT CONTINUING EFFECTIVENESS OF CEASEFIRE IN LAOS.
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